

88361-776-8/\$1.95

A Fun
Quiz Yourself
Section Included!

Davy Crockett



Davy Crockett



Academic Industries, Inc.
West Haven, Connecticut 06516

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ISBN 0-88301-776-8

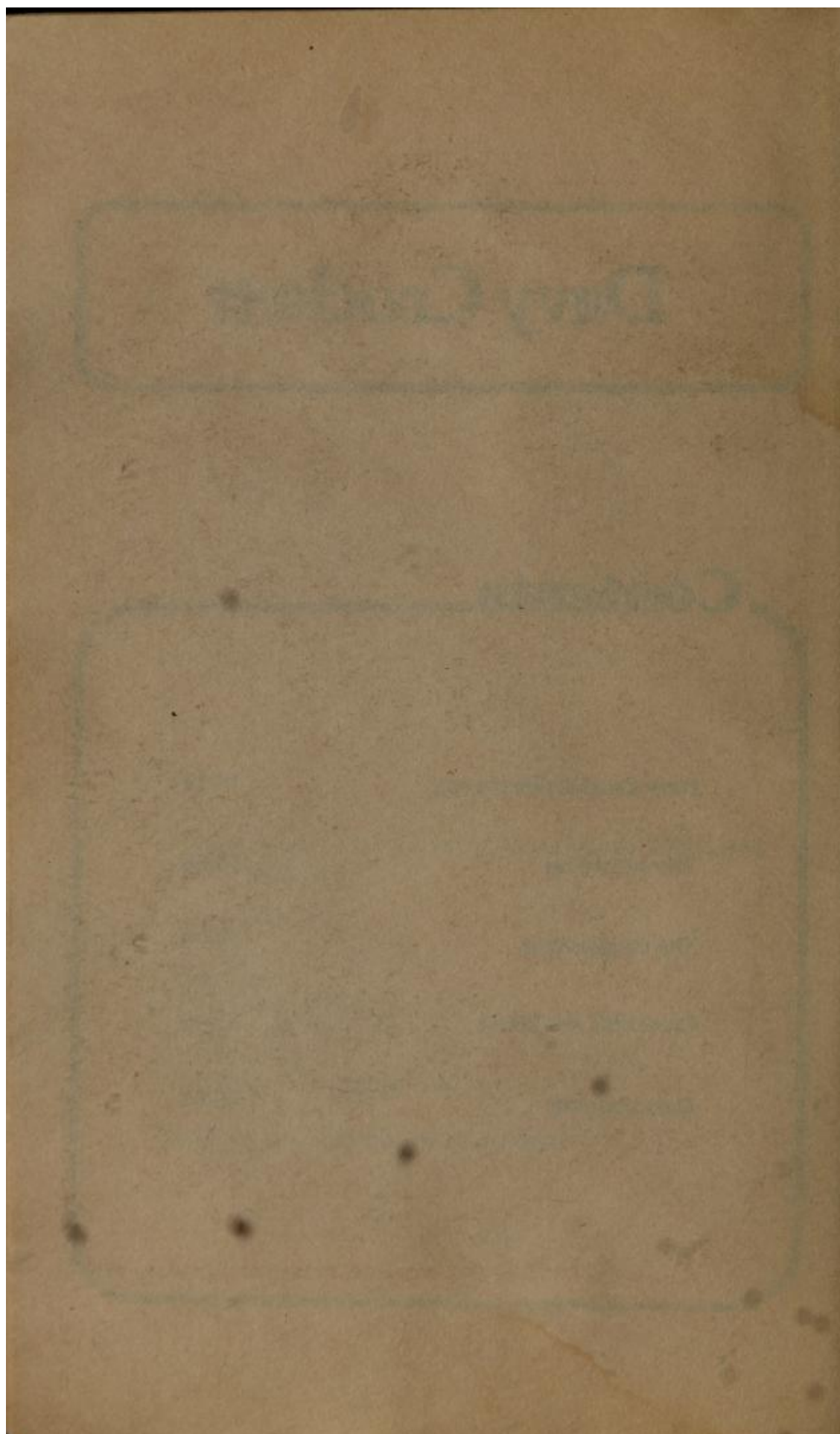
Published by
Academic Industries, Inc.
The Academic Building
Saw Mill Road
West Haven, Connecticut 06516

Printed in the United States of America

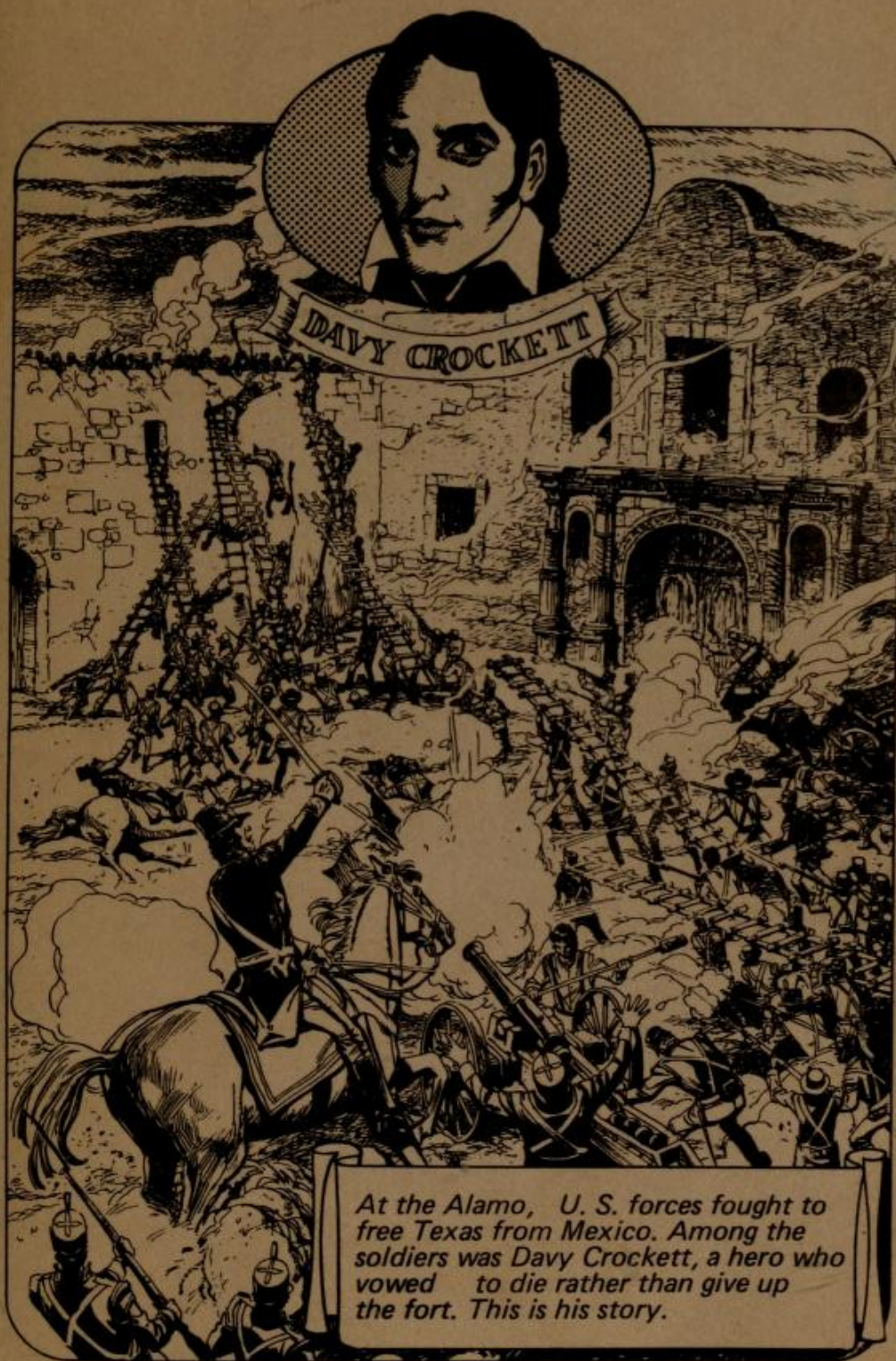
Davy Crockett

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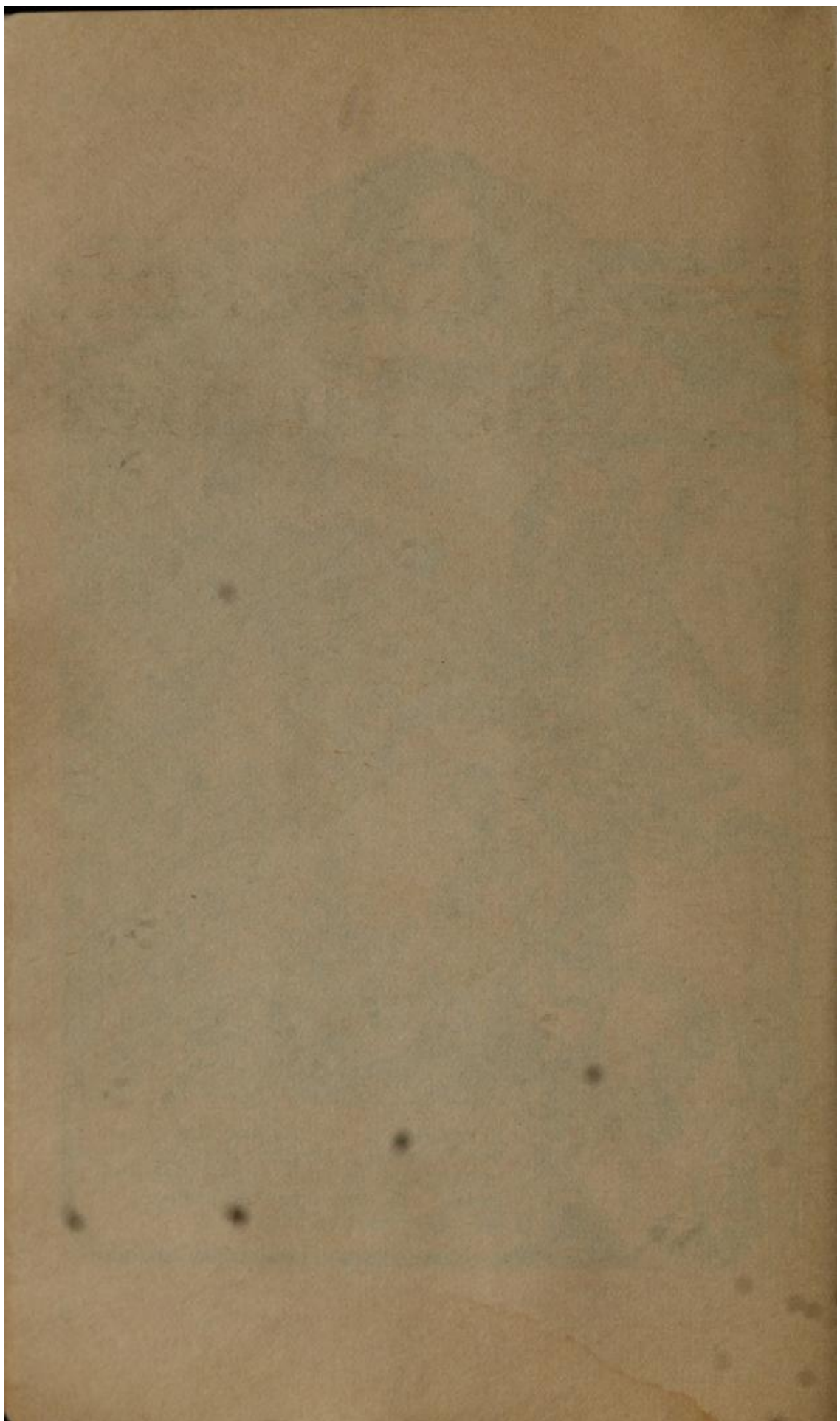
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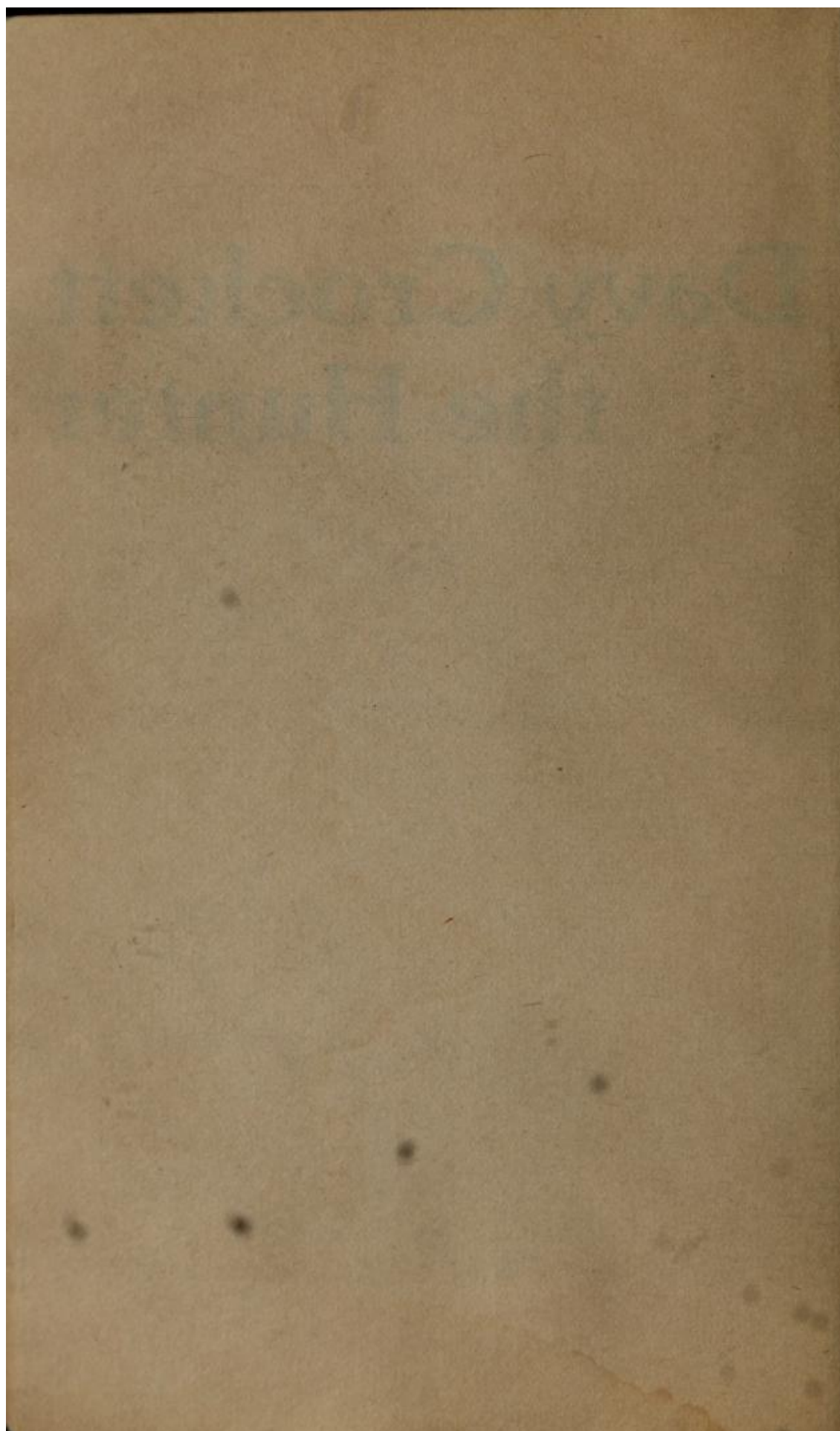
Davy Crockett



At the Alamo, U. S. forces fought to free Texas from Mexico. Among the soldiers was Davy Crockett, a hero who vowed to die rather than give up the fort. This is his story.



Davy Crockett the Hunter



Davy Crockett

In 1786, fifty years before the battle at the Alamo, a band of Indians attacked a cabin in Tennessee.



The owner, David Crockett, and some of his family were killed.

A short time later, only a few miles away, a ninth child was born to his son, John Crockett.

A boy! I want to name him David, after my father.

Yes, and we'll call him Davy.



Young Davy learned early how to handle a gun.

You're eight years old, son. Think you can go hunting by yourself?

Yes, sir!



POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

Take my gun and go hunting whenever you want. But you're to take only one bullet with you.



Any time you miss your shot, you'll go to bed without supper!

Y-yes, sir!



Davy soon became the best shot in a country full of sharpshooters. He grew up. He liked dances. At one he met a girl named Polly Finlay.

There's a shooting match coming up, Polly. If I could win the prize, I'd have a question to ask you.

I'll be waiting, Davy . . . and cheering for you!



More than eighty men entered the contest. The first prize was a cow.

Each man has one shot from fifty yards away. The best shooters will try again from seventy-five, and so on.



Davy Crockett

Davy used his father's gun called "Old Betsy." He reached the last test, at one hundred yards.

I can hit that target with one eye shut. Come on, Old Betsy!



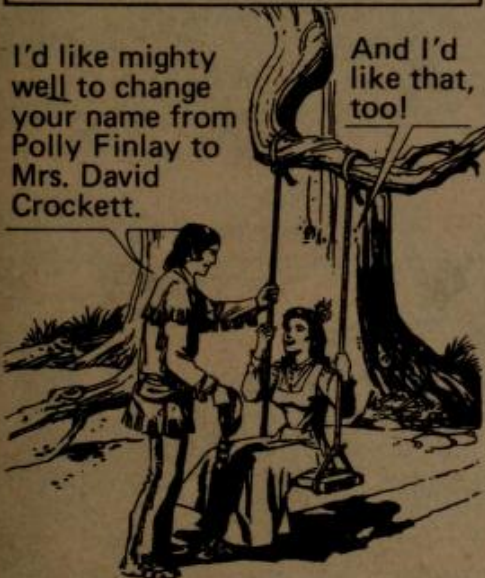
A bull's-eye! The winner . . . young Davy Crockett!



Davy sold his cow for five gold dollars. Then he went to Polly's house.

I'd like mighty well to change your name from Polly Finlay to Mrs. David Crockett.

And I'd like that, too!



Two weeks later they were married, and moved to their new home.

It's lovely, Davy . . . our own home!

Just as long as I pay the twenty-five cents a month rent!



POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

After a year they had a baby boy.

I want my children to grow up in a new country! There's fine land and great hunting in south Tennessee!

How far away is it? How would we get there?



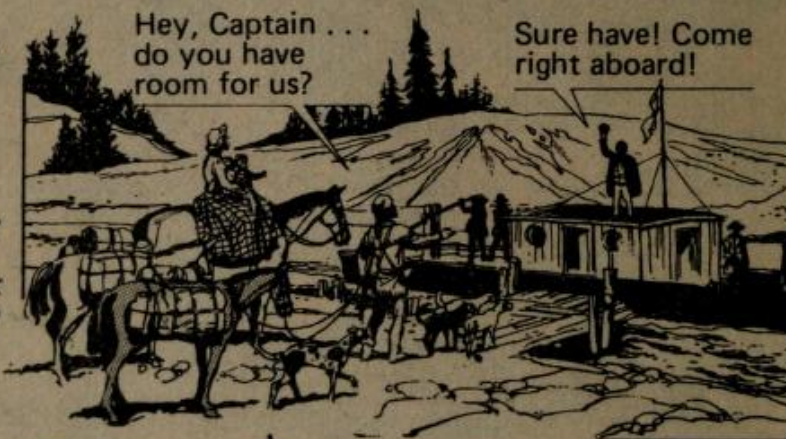
A week's travel by boat would do it. We wouldn't have to take much with us.



The next spring, Polly agreed to move, even though by then there were two babies. Davy and Polly went to look for a boat to take them south.

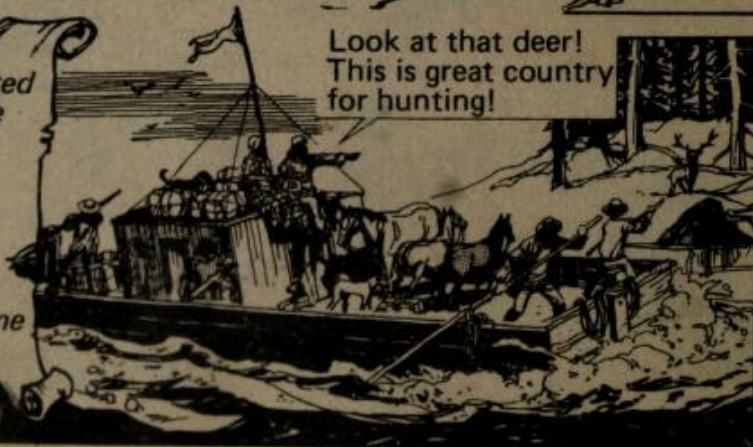
Hey, Captain ... do you have room for us?

Sure have! Come right aboard!



The boat floated at last into the big Tennessee River. Davy's family slept in bunks on top of the cabin. Other passengers came and left again.

Look at that deer! This is great country for hunting!

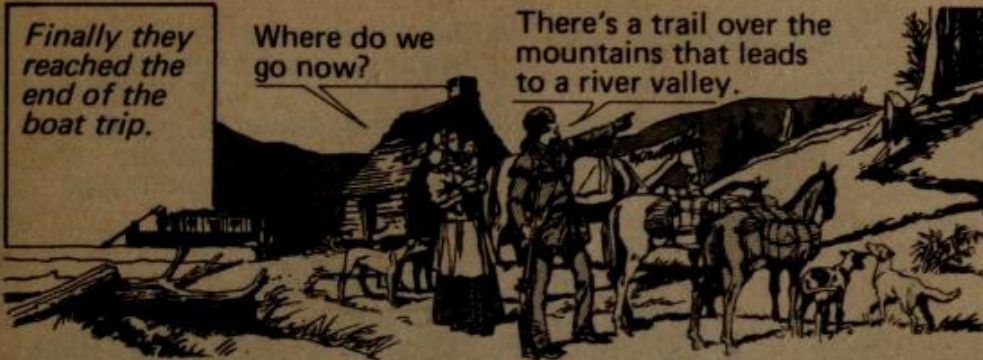


Davy Crockett

Finally they reached the end of the boat trip.

Where do we go now?

There's a trail over the mountains that leads to a river valley.



It was fine weather. They camped along the trail.

Here's dinner! Is the pot ready? I've never seen so much game!



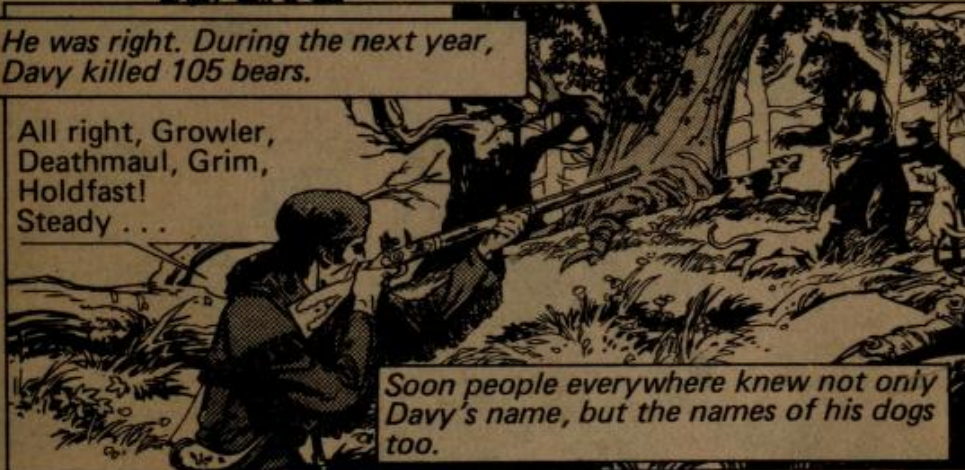
In a few days they found a good place to settle. Davy built a small cabin.

This is a good cabin, I'll soon cover that dirt floor with bear skins!



He was right. During the next year, Davy killed 105 bears.

All right, Growler, Deathmaul, Grim, Holdfast! Steady . . .



Soon people everywhere knew not only Davy's name, but the names of his dogs too.

POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

Word of them spread all over Tennessee.

That young Davy Crockett's killed enough bears to feed every person in the county!

And enough raccoons to make a cap for every man and boy!



But the year was 1812. There was other more important news.

We're at war with England again. And the English are trying to get the Indians to fight against us.



At Fort Mims in Alabama, the Indians wiped out a whole town. Maybe the country can use another sharpshooter.



Oh, Davy! Don't go to war!

My grandfather fought the English—father, too. Now it's my turn. It won't be for long, Polly.



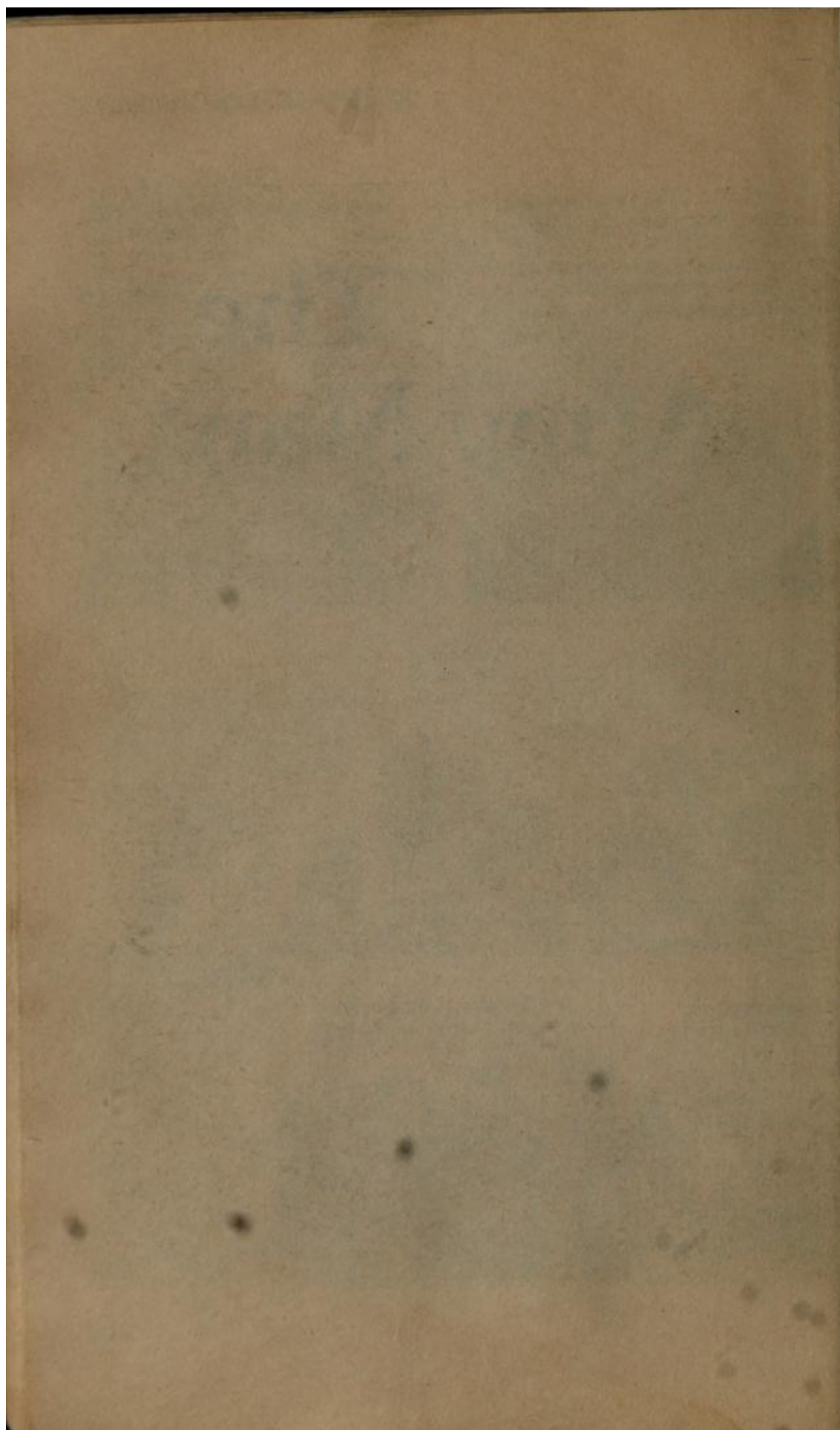
So Davy went off with his gun, leaving his dogs behind. He headed for a camp where he knew men were gathering. Among them was Colonel John Coffee.

This is a good place for a camp—but where's the army?

It's on the way. And General Andrew Jackson's leading it!



The Army Man



Davy Crockett

Trouble is, the food has been held up somewhere. There's nothing to eat but a little flour, salt, and molasses.

No meat? I can get us some. There are signs of bears around here.

I've heard you are the best bear hunter in Tennessee . . .

That's a lie! I'm the best bear hunter on earth!



Davy took a few men and left camp. Soon General Jackson arrived with the army.

I've brought plenty of guns and powder, but not much food.

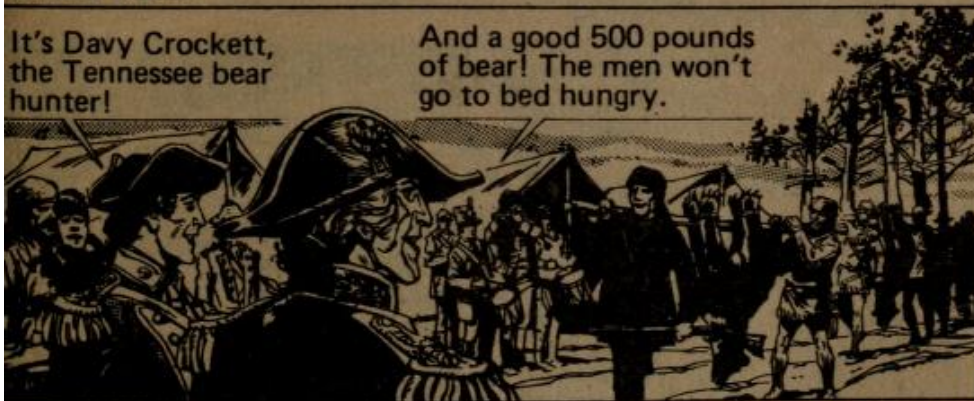
That's too bad, because we have no food here!



Just then they heard a loud noise and saw a strange parade coming toward them.

It's Davy Crockett, the Tennessee bear hunter!

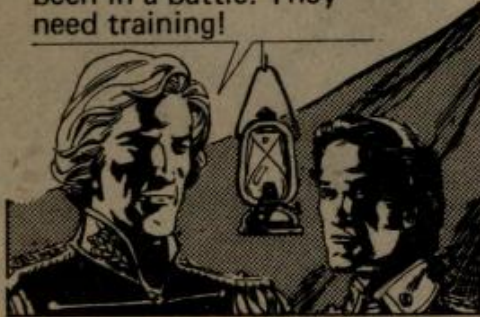
And a good 500 pounds of bear! The men won't go to bed hungry.



POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

Soon General Jackson had 1,500 men to fight the Indians. But he was worried.

Every day there are more reports of Indian attacks. But my men have never been in a battle. They need training!



We can wait no longer. How many good fighting men could you pick out of this bunch?

Would fifty help?

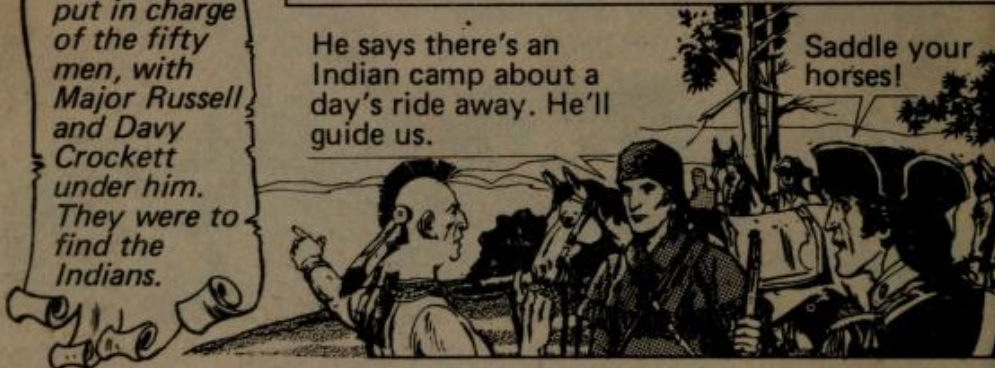


Coffee was put in charge of the fifty men, with Major Russell and Davy Crockett under him. They were to find the Indians.

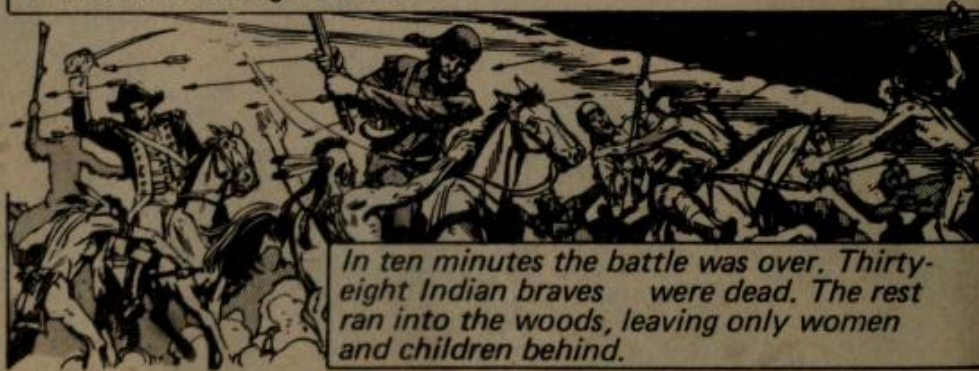
For a month they tracked Indian raiding parties with no luck. Then . . .

He says there's an Indian camp about a day's ride away. He'll guide us.

Saddle your horses!



At dawn the next day, Coffee and his men attacked. Bullets and arrows flew through the air.



In ten minutes the battle was over. Thirty-eight Indian braves were dead. The rest ran into the woods, leaving only women and children behind.

Davy Crockett

Davy was the only white man who knew the Indians' language.

The women think they will be killed.

Tell them to get their things. We'll take them to the army camp where they'll be safe.



Back at the main army camp there was a new problem.

This man says 200 friendly Indians and several white families are at Fort Talladega. They are being attacked by 1,100 Creeks.



The Creeks had said that unless those in the fort joined them against the whites, they would kill them all. Jackson and his army started to move.

He sent Davy and Russell ahead to look things over.

The Creeks can take that fort any time they try!

They're telling the Indians inside the fort to come out by tomorrow!



We've got to help those poor Indians inside the fort. They're on our side! I'll ride back and find General Jackson!



Davy rode fast through the woods.

If the Creeks have a scout posted, they'll see me for sure.



POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

He found Jackson's camp six miles back. Quickly, Jackson told 500 men to follow Crockett. They reached the fort just after sunrise.

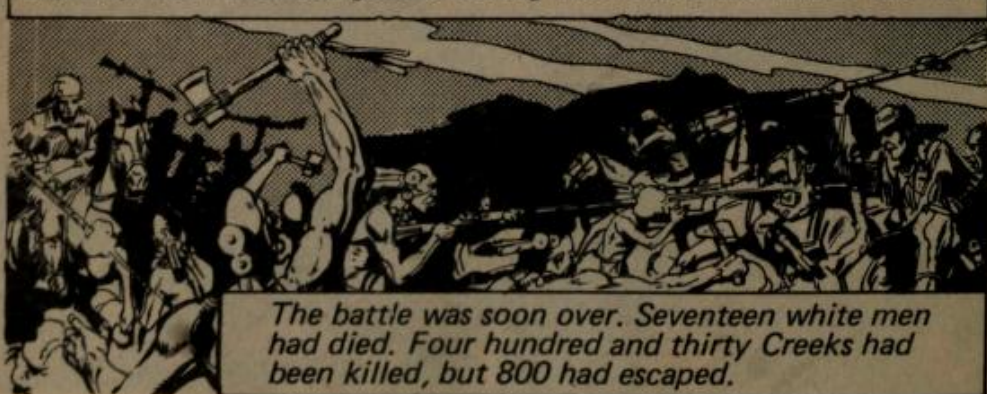
The Creeks know we're here. Divide your men and circle the fort. I'll attack from behind.



Bravely Russell and his men moved forward. The Creeks were waiting for them in thick bushes. They rushed out to attack.



Then Crockett and his men attacked from behind. When the Creeks ran, they met American guns shooting from the other side of the fort.



The battle was soon over. Seventeen white men had died. Four hundred and thirty Creeks had been killed, but 800 had escaped.

Davy Crockett

The army then moved to a new camp. Jackson sent the scouts to find out what the Indians were planning.

A strong group of Indians is gathered on the Tallapoosa River, close to the ford.

That's where they expect us to cross. I'll bet a thousand Indians are waiting there to ambush us!

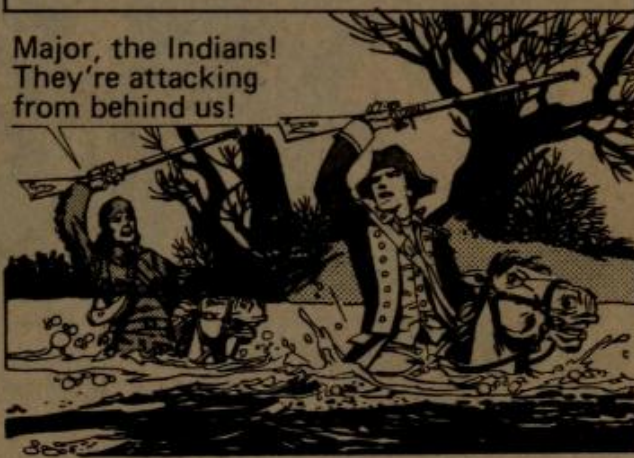


We'll cross five miles down the river. It's harder, but we'll surprise them and attack from the other side.



At first, everything went as planned. The main army crossed the river. The cannons crossed. Then the scouts followed.

Major, the Indians! They're attacking from behind us!



The Indians had learned of Jackson's plan. They made a surprise attack from the rear, catching the scouts in mid-stream.



POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

Jackson's men had never been in battle before. Instead of firing at the Indians, they ran for the woods. Colonel Carroll shouted after them.

Come back!



Charging through the water, the scouts forced their way ashore and into hand-to-hand combat with the Indians.



Carroll called for more men.

General Jackson himself came back to help fire the cannon.

*Steady, now!
Aim the cannon.*

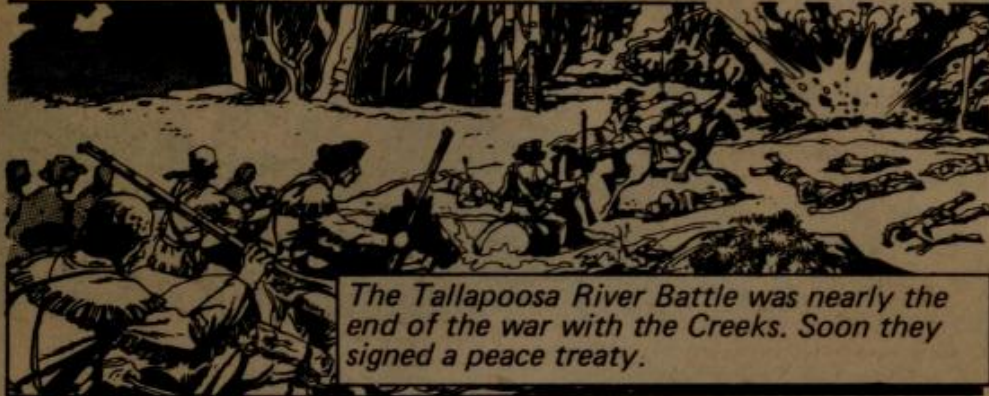


Aim well, men!



Davy Crockett

The cannon fire was too much for the Indians. They ran back into the woods.



The Tallapoosa River Battle was nearly the end of the war with the Creeks. Soon they signed a peace treaty.

But Davy did not like the treaty.

I've killed many an Indian, but now I'm sorry. This treaty is not fair to the Indians!

I'm an Army man, Davy. I do what I'm told.



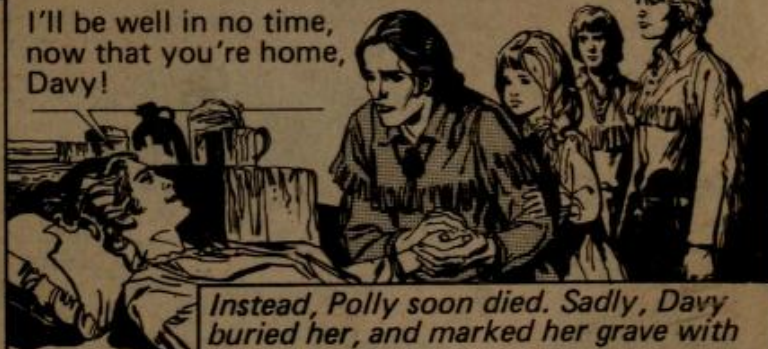
I'm a hunter and a fighter, but I guess I'm no Army man. I'll be glad to get out of it.



From then on, Davy was a friend of the Indians.

He left the army and went home. The children were well, but not his Polly.

I'll be well in no time, now that you're home, Davy!



Instead, Polly soon died. Sadly, Davy buried her, and marked her grave with a large rock.

POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

Elizabeth Patton, whose husband had been killed in the war, lived nearby with her two children. She was lonely. Davy was lonely without Polly, too.

After a while, Davy asked Elizabeth to marry him.

Why don't we get together and make one big, happy family?

That's fine, Davy.



Then the Crocketts moved farther west. Their new neighbors were glad to see them.

We'd be proud to have such a well-known scout around here, Colonel Crockett!



Soon they elected Colonel Crockett a judge.

A judge needs to read law. I'll have to work on it.



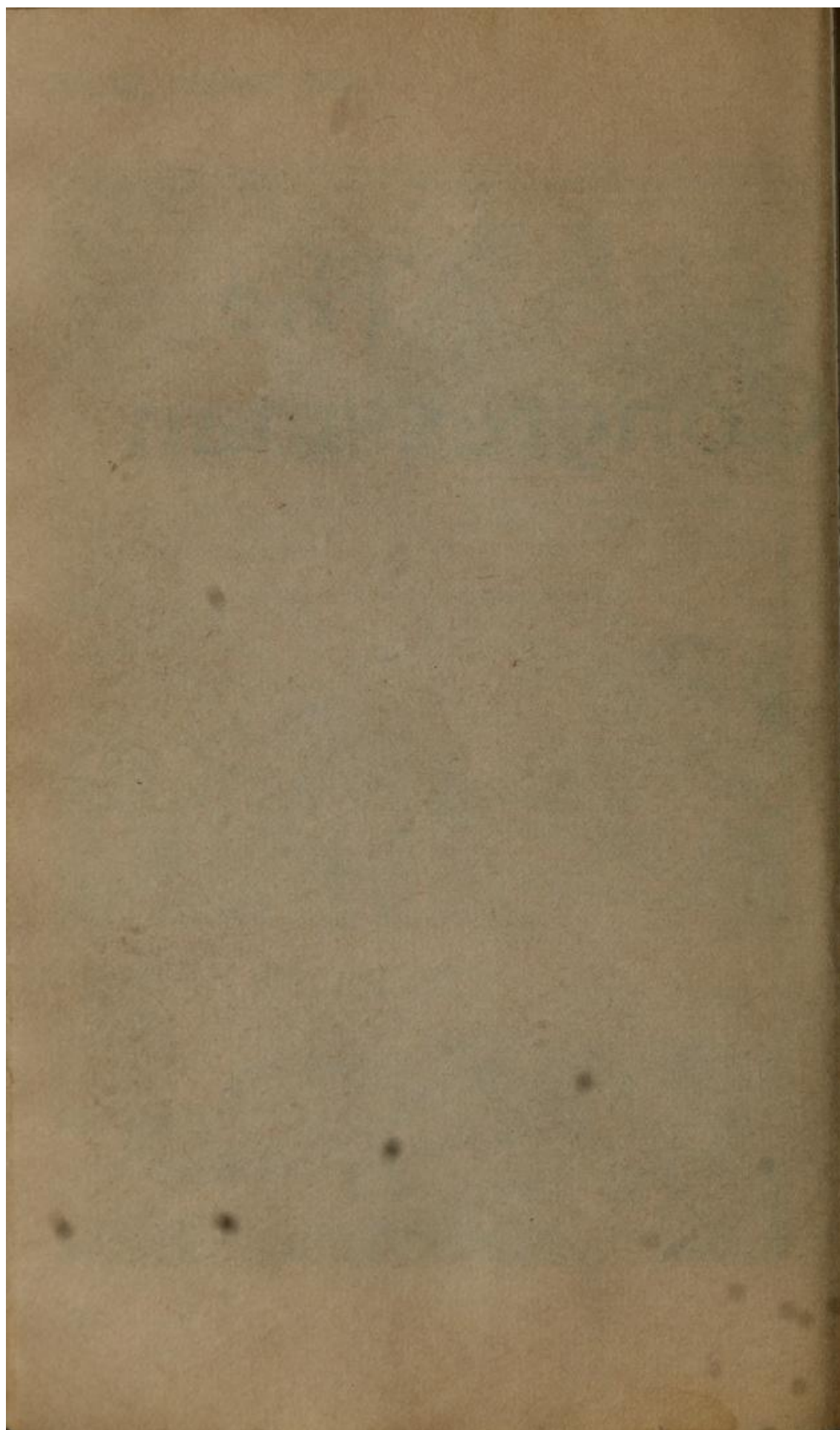
Meanwhile, Davy built the first grist mill in the neighborhood.

Mighty handy to get my corn and wheat ground so close to home.

It sure is. I'm glad to help.



The Congressman



Davy Crockett

Not long after this, Davy was elected to the state government. When he came home he found that a flood had washed away his mill.

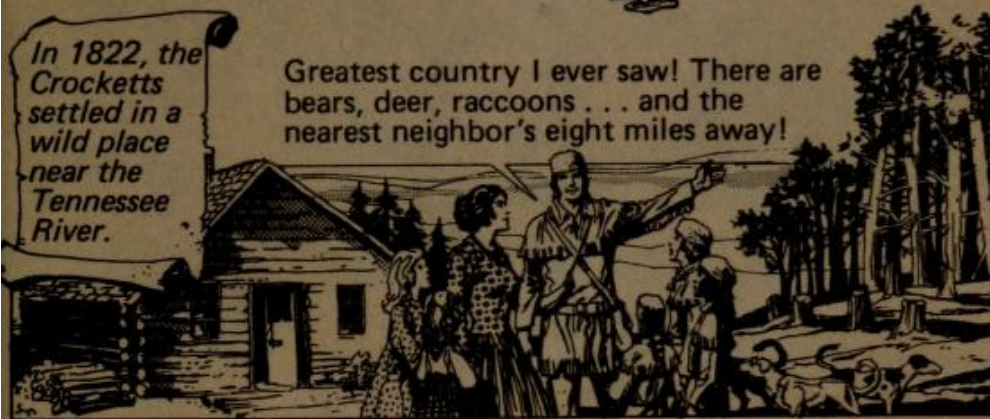
Don't worry, dear.
We'll sell everything
and move west.

That's the kind of
talk I like! Maybe
we can find a place
where the hunting's
still good!



*In 1822, the
Crocketts
settled in a
wild place
near the
Tennessee
River.*

Greatest country I ever saw! There are
bears, deer, raccoons . . . and the
nearest neighbor's eight miles away!



Will you
teach us
to hunt,
Pa?

I'll teach
you all I
know
about it,
son!

*For the next few years, Davy
often took his sons with him
into the woods.*



POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

The Tennessee bear hunter was becoming known all over the country. Strangers often stopped to hear his stories.

I've heard that you hunt alligators, too, Mr. Crockett.

Well, yes. As a matter of fact, I like to tame them. I'd rather ride on a gator than in a canoe—faster ride, less work!



Two of the strangers had a different question.

Crockett, will you run for congressman from Tennessee?

Not now. I've just started a business. But some other time I might say yes.



Davy's business was making and selling staves. He had a group of men cutting down trees and making the staves. Another group was building flat boats.

I'll float 30,000 staves down the Mississippi on these two boats. Then we'll sell them in New Orleans.



Davy hired a man named Captain Whale to pilot the boats.

Welcome, Captain! I hear you're one of the best pilots on these rivers.

That's true, Mr. Crockett—if I do say so!



Davy Crockett

But on the big Mississippi, Captain Whale did not seem to know what to do.

Were you ever a pilot on *this* river?

Well, I . . . I was an assistant pilot once!



Davy had the men tie both boats together. Night came.

When are we going to tie up for the night?

Well . . . uh . . . pretty soon.



But Whale did not know how to bring a boat to shore! And on a bad part of the river known as Devil's Elbow, they crashed into an island.

Every man for himself!



POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

Although they were all badly shaken, everyone reached the island safely. There Davy talked to his men.

Boys, the people of west Tennessee need me to save them and save the country by running for Congress!



I plan to have two laws passed—one to keep fools from going into the wood stave business, and another to hang fake river pilots!



Home again, Davy went hunting. Soon he was able to take a bundle of furs to the store to trade.

How come you have no raccoon skins?

I'm saving them. I plan to run for Congress this fall.



I figure I'll need a couple of fine new caps when I get to Washington!

Sounds like you're sure you're going to win!



Davy did win. He had many friends, and they got people to vote for him.

Davy Crockett

During his first two years in Congress, Davy stayed quiet and learned. But people soon grew to know him on the streets of Washington.

Who in the world is that?

That's Davy Crockett, the congressman from Tennessee.



Would you tell us about yourself, Congressman?

Why, I'm David Crockett, fresh from the backwoods. I'm half horse, half alligator, and part snapping turtle!



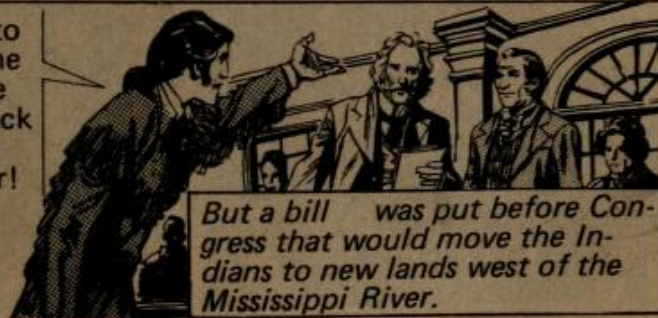
I can wade the Mississippi, leap the Ohio, or ride a streak of lightning. I can also fight wildcats, hug a bear too close for comfort, and make stew out of any man who's against Jackson!



Davy was proud of General Andrew Jackson, who had become president. But in Davy's second term, he found he didn't always agree with the president.

Gold had been found on Indian land in several southern states. These states now wanted the land for themselves.

That land belonged to the Indians before the white man ever came here! It was given back to the Indians at the end of the Creek war! We must not take it away.



But a bill was put before Congress that would move the Indians to new lands west of the Mississippi River.

POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

President Jackson wanted the bill to pass. So did all the other Tennessee congressmen. But Davy spoke against it.

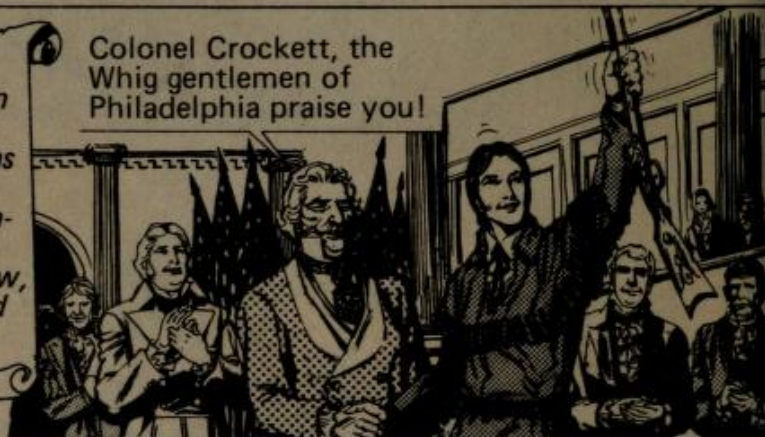


It is not fair! I would rather be an old dog belonging to a poor man in the forest than belong to a party that will not be fair to everyone!

Most people did not care about the Indians, and Davy was not sent to Congress that year. But in 1833 he was elected again.

This time he was a leader in the new Whig party. He was sent to many cities. In Philadelphia they gave him a new, silver-trimmed gun.

Colonel Crockett, the Whig gentlemen of Philadelphia praise you!



In New York...

Colonel Crockett, our great city is yours! Here is the key!

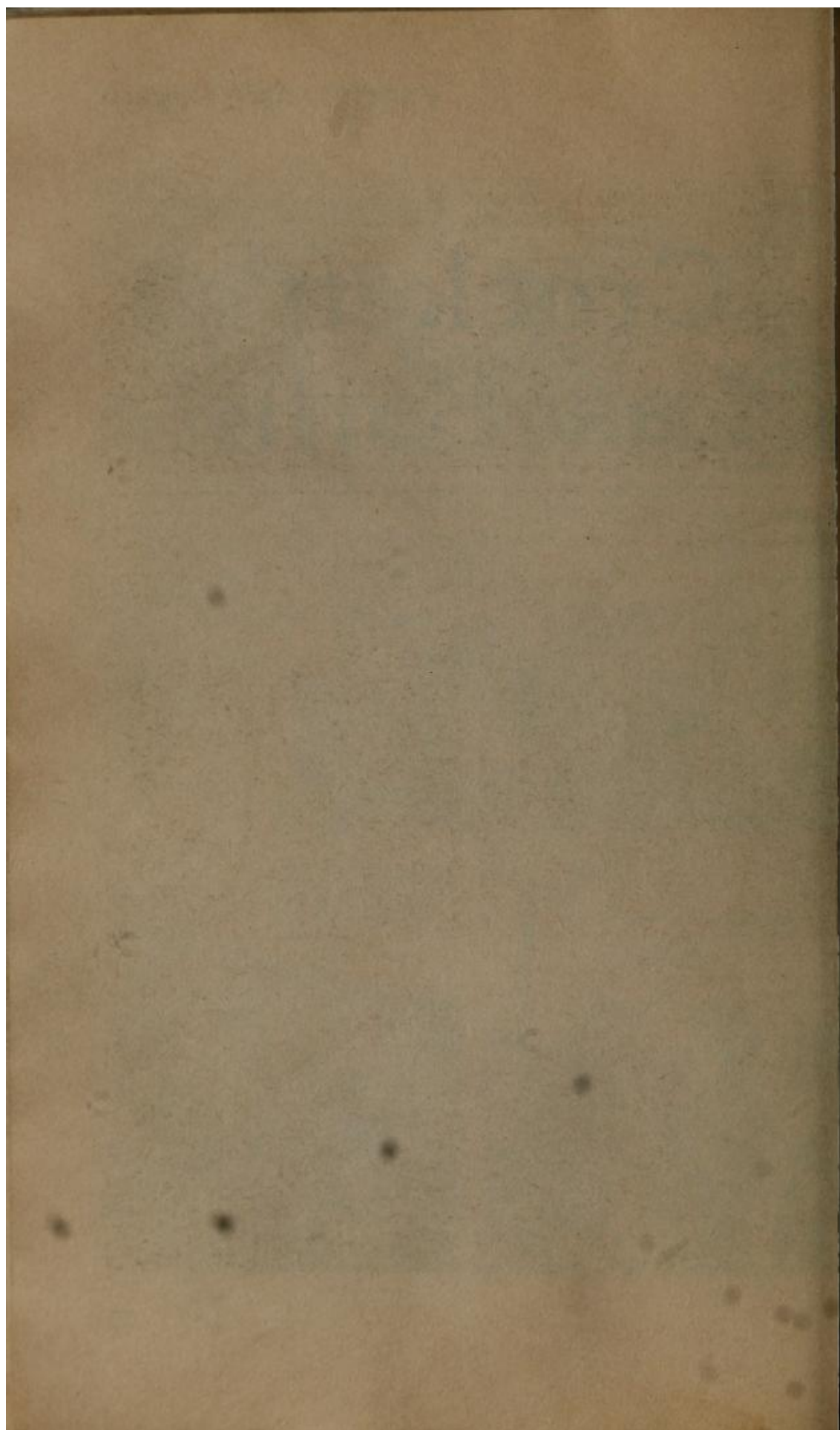


And in Boston...

Colonel Crockett, our great city is honored...



Crockett's Last Battle



Davy Crockett

But the people at home did not like what Davy was doing.

You voting for Colonel Crockett again?

Not me!

So Davy Crockett did not go back to Washington.

He was angry. He felt the Tennessee people had let him down.

If they don't want me in Tennessee, I'll go to Texas. Something big's going on down there!

They're fighting to be free from Mexico. They need help!

I wish I could go along, Pa.

Davy left in November, 1835. He reached Texas in January, 1836.

Welcome to Texas, Colonel Crockett!

Greetings to you from the state of Tennessee!

POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

Later, after a party in his honor, Davy heard some news.



Davy signed the paper.



Davy rode south and west to San Antonio. It was night when he reached the Alamo, an old Spanish mission used as a fort.



Jim Bowie, a famous scout, rushed out to welcome Davy.



Colonels Travis and Bowie told Davy how things stood.

Santa Anna, the leader of Mexico's army, is moving toward Texas with his troops.

He has cannons, too. We have only about 150 men at the Alamo.



But every day we can hold Santa Anna's army here, it's a day longer for the main Texas army to get ready!

Then we had better hold the Alamo!



When the Mexicans arrived, they surrounded the Alamo. Santa Anna sent a message: "Give up or die!" Travis answered, "Never!" The battle of the Alamo had begun.

Make every shot count, men!



Inside the Alamo there was no sleep for anyone. The men ran from one wall to another, as the Mexicans raised ladders.

Powder and bullets ran low.

Quick—to the west wall!

I guess I'll have to start using nails!

Is it as bad as that?



POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

By the end of the battle, men were fighting hand-to-hand. Davy and the other men fought with guns, knives, and fists until not a man among them was still alive.



They had stopped Santa Anna's army for twelve days. The men Santa Anna lost at the Alamo had been his best troops.

Seven weeks later, General Sam Houston and the Texas army defeated the rest of the Mexican army. They had their own battle cry.

Remember
the Alamo!



Part of the Alamo still stands in San Antonio today. Davy Crockett was one of the small band of heroes who died there to make Texas free.



Pioneer, bear hunter, army scout, and "coonskin congressman," Davy Crockett was an American hero even in his own day.

THE
END

Do you remember?



When he went hunting, Davy took along Growler, Deathmaul, Grim, and Holdfast. They were:

- a. his guns. b. his dogs. c. his horses.



When fighting the Creek Indians, Davy served under a man who would become President. He was:

- a. General George Washington. b. General U.S. Grant.
c. General Andrew Jackson.

POCKET BIOGRAPHIES



After serving in the army, Davy moved farther west where hunting was poor. To make a living he:

- a. built a grist mill. b. became a farmer. c. raised cattle.

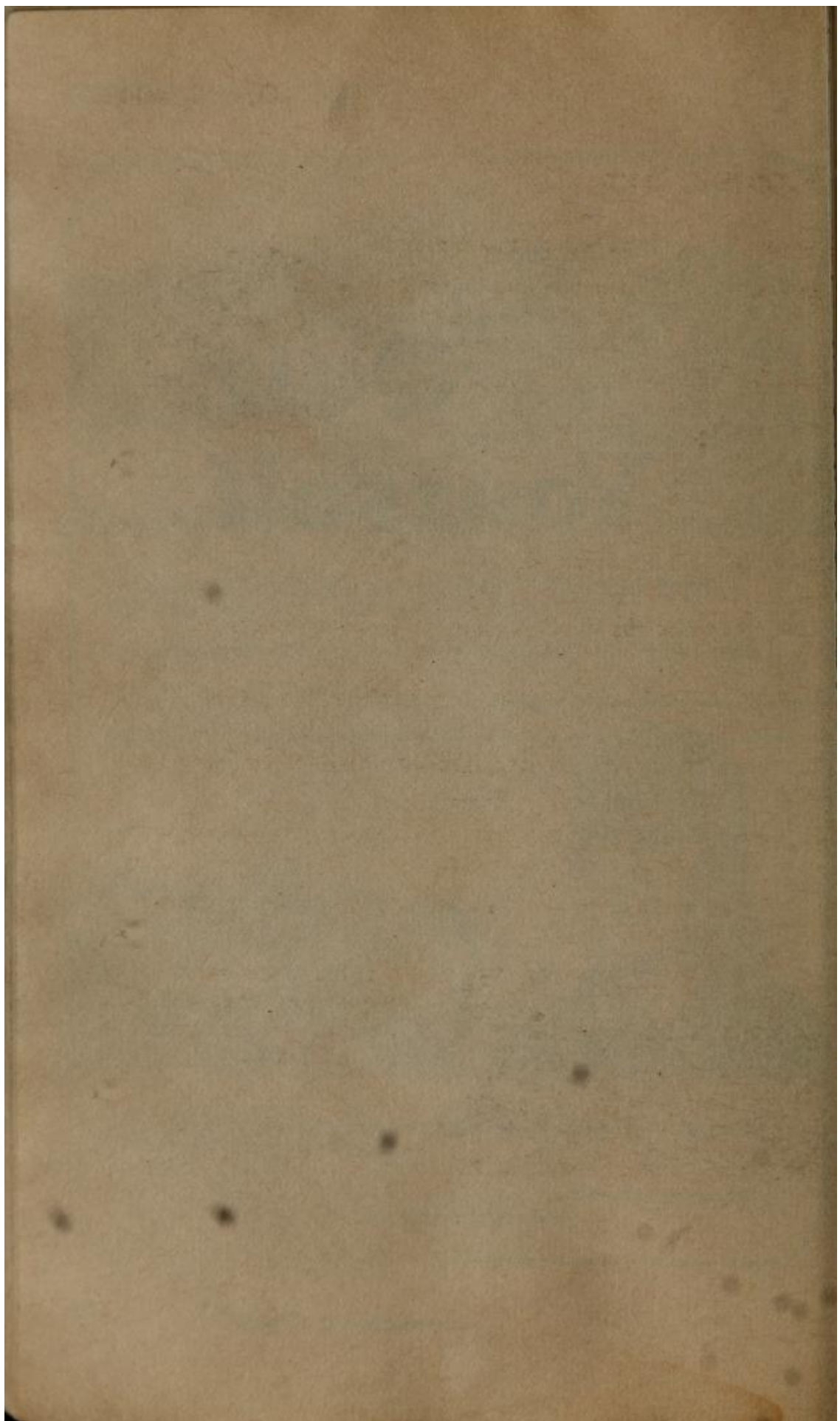


When Davy Crockett arrived in Washington to serve in Congress, he attracted attention because:

- a. he was so tall. b. he was so famous.
c. he wore a coonskin cap.

Quiz Yourself

(Answers at end of section)



Words to know

target	something that is shot at
pioneer	a person who lives in a part of the country that has not yet been settled
combat	fighting, usually in a war
surrounded	made a circle around
troops	soldiers



Can you use them?

Using the words above, complete the following sentences.

1. The Indians _____ the fort so that no one could escape.
2. When the soldiers ran out of bullets, they fought each other in hand-to-hand _____.
3. Davy Crockett was the first _____ to see the wild country beyond the mountains.
4. The government sent _____ to help the pioneers fight off the Indians.
5. Caught in the middle of the stream, the soldiers were an easy _____ for the Indians.



POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

Using pictures

In reading illustrated stories, you will find it helpful to "read" the pictures as well as the words. Look at this picture. It shows us the kinds of weapons that were used in colonial times. We can see cannons and swords. As you are reading, look at the other pictures to see what other weapons were used then.



While you are reading

Men like Davy Crockett helped to build our country and make it great. They could do any job they had to do. While you are reading, make a list of all the different kinds of jobs Davy Crockett had to do as he helped build our country.



Davy Crockett

How well did you read?

When you have finished reading, answer the following questions.

1. Which of the following were jobs Davy did besides being a hunter and an Indian fighter?

(Check the correct answers.)

- ☐ a. He operated a grist mill.
- ☐ b. He ran a ferry.
- ☐ c. He made and sold staves.
- ☐ d. He sold log cabins to other settlers.
- ☐ e. He served in the government.
- ☐ f. He was a trapper.



2. Davy Crockett became a sharpshooter when he was only a boy because:

(Check the correct answer.)



- ☐ a. there were big prizes given to the best shot in the county.
- ☐ b. he and his family were always fighting against the Indians.
- ☐ c. he wanted to show off for his friends.
- ☐ d. his father taught him that hunters who killed no game went hungry.

POCKET BIOGRAPHIES

3. Why didn't Davy Crockett like the bill before Congress that would move the Indians to land west of the Mississippi?

(Check the correct answer.)

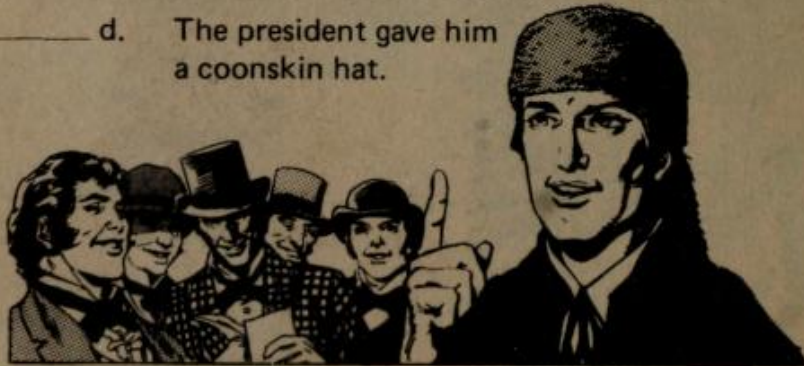


- _____ a. He would lose the grist mill he had built there.
- _____ b. He wanted the Indians to move farther west for the white man's protection.
- _____ c. He thought it was unfair to the Indians.
- _____ d. He knew it would cause a war with Mexico.

4. Why was Davy Crockett called the "coonskin congressman?"

(Check the correct answer.)

- _____ a. He wore his pioneer clothing and a coonskin hat to Washington.
- _____ b. He was elected by a group of raccoon skin traders.
- _____ c. He came from the "coonskin state."
- _____ d. The president gave him a coonskin hat.



Davy Crockett

5. Why was "Remember the Alamo" used as a battle cry to help the soldiers keep fighting?

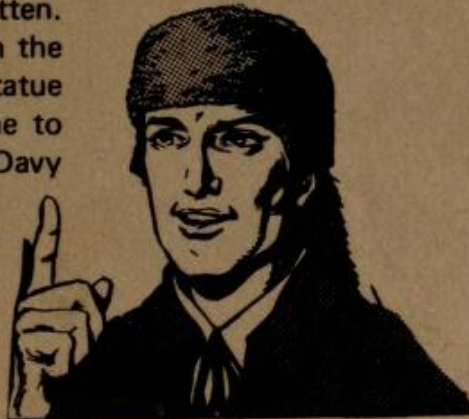
(Check the correct answer.)

- _____ a. It was a reminder not to give up as the soldiers had at the Alamo.
- _____ b. It reminded them of the brave men who fought and died at the Alamo.
- _____ c. It was a signal to attack.
- _____ d. It was a war cry used in all wars.



Using what you've read

When Davy Crockett was killed at the Alamo, America lost a great hero. People often put up statues of their country's heroes so that they will never be forgotten. Write a sign to be placed on the base of a Davy Crockett statue telling the people who come to see it why we remember Davy Crockett.



ANSWER KEY

DAVY CROCKETT

Can you use them?

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| 1. surrounded | 3. pioneer |
| 2. combat | 4. troops |
| 5. target | |

How well did you read?

- | | |
|------------|------|
| 1. a, c, e | 3. c |
| 2. d | 4. a |
| 5. b | |

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COMPLETE LIST OF POCKET CLASSICS AVAILABLE

CLASSICS

- C 1 Black Beauty
- C 2 The Call of the Wild
- C 3 Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
- C 4 Dracula
- C 5 Frankenstein
- C 6 Huckleberry Finn
- C 7 Moby Dick
- C 8 The Red Badge of Courage
- C 9 The Time Machine
- C10 Tom Sawyer
- C11 Treasure Island
- C12 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea
- C13 The Great Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
- C14 Gulliver's Travels
- C15 The Hunchback of Notre Dame
- C16 The Invisible Man
- C17 Journey to the Center of the Earth
- C18 Kidnapped
- C19 The Mysterious Island
- C20 The Scarlet Letter
- C21 The Story of My Life
- C22 A Tale of Two Cities
- C23 The Three Musketeers
- C24 The War of the Worlds
- C25 Around the World in Eighty Days
- C26 Captains Courageous
- C27 A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court
- C28 The Hound of the Baskervilles
- C29 The House of the Seven Gables
- C30 Jane Eyre

COMPLETE LIST OF POCKET CLASSICS AVAILABLE
(cont'd)

- C31 The Last of the Mohicans
- C32 The Best of O. Henry
- C33 The Best of Poe
- C34 Two Years Before the Mast
- C35 White Fang
- C36 Wuthering Heights
- C37 Ben Hur
- C38 A Christmas Carol
- C39 The Food of the Gods
- C40 Ivanhoe
- C41 The Man in the Iron Mask
- C42 The Prince and the Pauper
- C43 The Prisoner of Zenda
- C44 The Return of the Native
- C45 Robinson Crusoe
- C46 The Scarlet Pimpernel
- C47 The Sea Wolf
- C48 The Swiss Family Robinson
- C49 Billy Budd
- C50 Crime and Punishment
- C51 Don Quixote
- C52 Great Expectations
- C53 Heidi
- C54 The Illiad
- C55 Lord Jim
- C56 The Mutiny on Board H.M.S. Bounty
- C57 The Odyssey
- C58 Oliver Twist
- C59 Pride and Prejudice
- C60 The Turn of the Screw

COMPLETE LIST OF POCKET CLASSICS AVAILABLE
(cont'd)

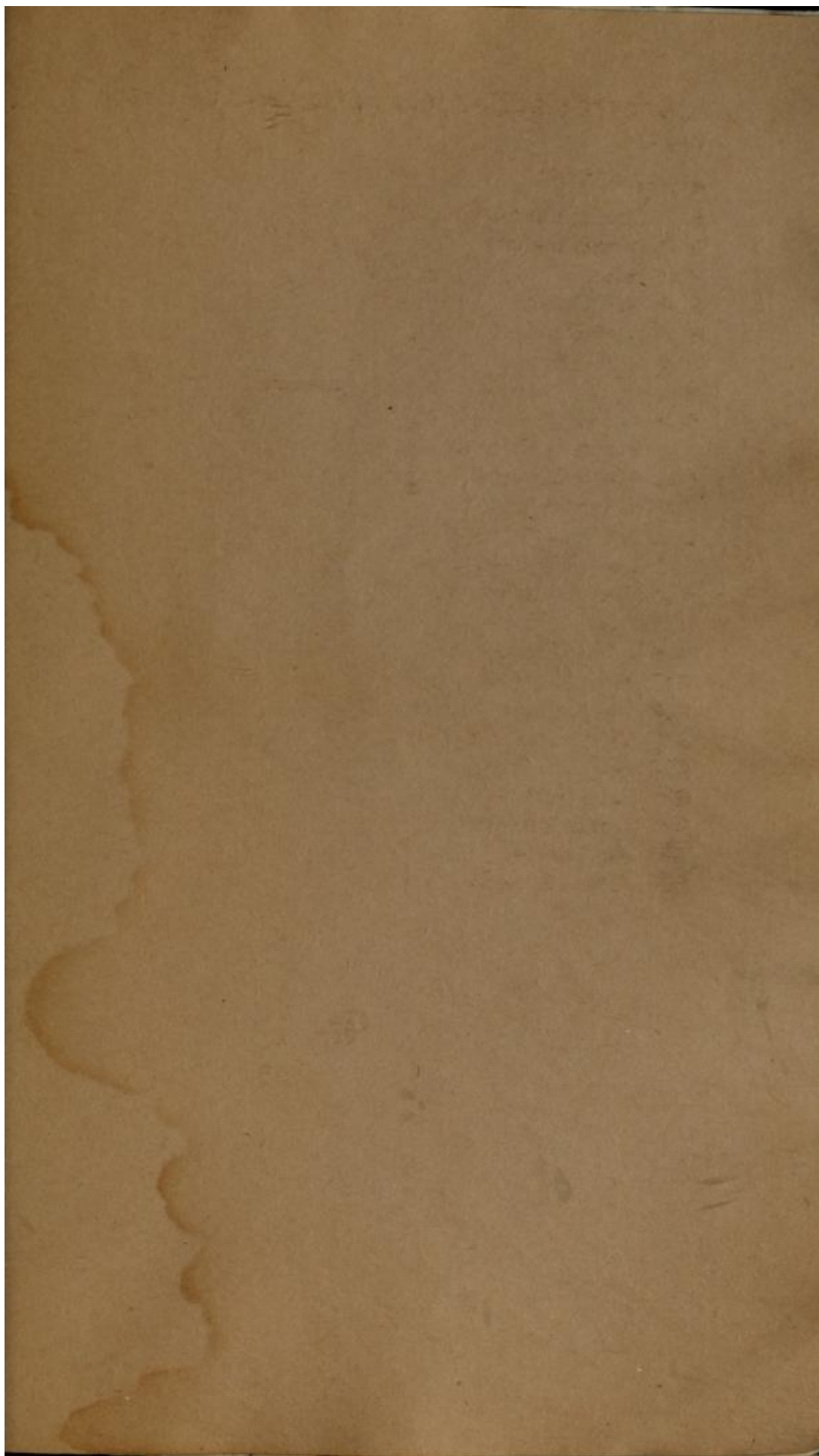
SHAKESPEARE

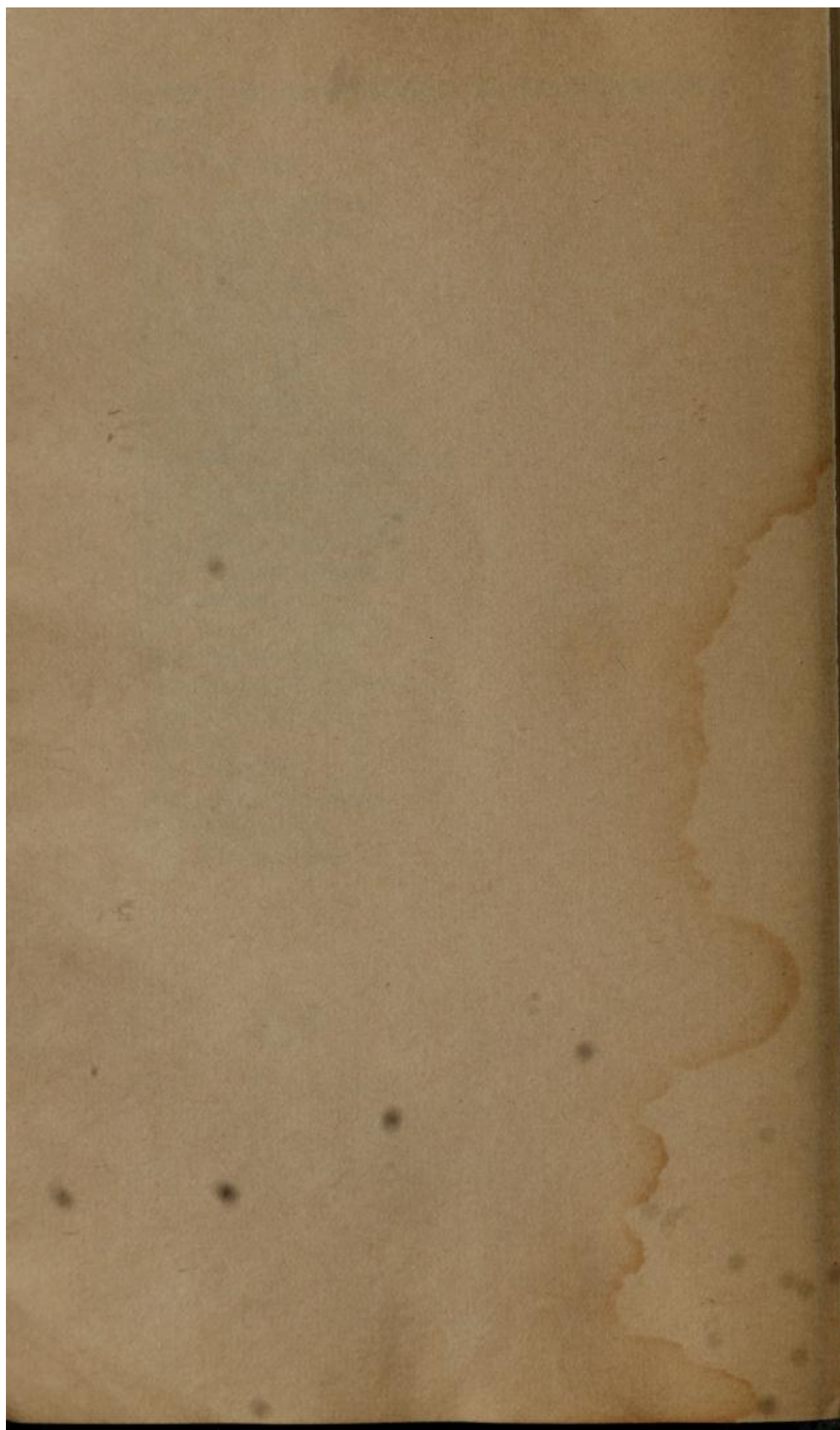
- S 1 As You Like It
- S 2 Hamlet
- S 3 Julius Caesar
- S 4 King Lear
- S 5 Macbeth
- S 6 The Merchant of Venice
- S 7 A Midsummer Night's Dream
- S 8 Othello
- S 9 Romeo and Juliet
- S10 The Taming of the Shrew
- S11 The Tempest
- S12 Twelfth Night

COMPLETE LIST OF POCKET CLASSICS AVAILABLE
(cont'd)

BIOGRAPHIES

- B 1 Charles Lindbergh
- B 2 Amelia Earhart
- B 3 Houdini
- B 4 Walt Disney
- B 5 Davy Crockett
- B 6 Daniel Boone
- B 7 Elvis Presley
- B 8 The Beatles
- B 9 Benjamin Franklin
- B10 Martin Luther King, Jr.
- B11 Abraham Lincoln
- B12 Franklin D. Roosevelt
- B13 George Washington
- B14 Thomas Jefferson
- B15 Madame Curie
- B16 Albert Einstein
- B17 Thomas Edison
- B18 Alexander Graham Bell
- B19 Vince Lombardi
- B20 Pelé
- B21 Babe Ruth
- B22 Jackie Robinson
- B23 Jim Thorpe
- B24 Althea Gibson











POCKET

Biographies

Davy Crockett

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